

Addresses and Sonnets Delivered at The Pilgrim Meeting Sunday, August 31st, 1913

The 163rd Anniversary of the Landing of Baron Henry William Stiegel in America, in St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania

The Finale of The Baron Stiegel Auto Pilgrimage, August 1, 1913

(From the Manheim Sentinel.)

Regardless of the very warm weather on Sunday afternoon, August 31, 1913, when the meeting was held in St. Matthew's church, at York, to finish a program which was left uncompleted at the recent annual pilgrimage of Baron Stiegel's descendants and others interested in his life's work, a multitude attended and a very interesting program was given.

After an organ prelude, Prof. E. A. Frey, chorister, led the mighty chorus "Rock of Ages," and Rev. S. E. Her-ring led in prayer. Rev. J. E. Harms, pastor, delivered a short and most hearty address of welcome. He said:

"I count it a rare pleasure to welcome the Baron Stiegel Pilgrims to our church this afternoon. The presence of men who are interested in immortalizing the memory of one of God's good men is a dignity which no church can despise. It is eminently fitting that this service in the interests of local history be held in the house of God. I take it that it is not your purpose today to talk lightly about the good times we had as Pilgrims through Lancaster county, but to think reverently about the impressions that were made upon us by what we saw and what we heard.

"I count it one of the happy experiences of my life to have been able to go with the Pilgrims on their pilgrimage through that section of Lancaster county which has been made historic by reason of the activities of Baron Stiegel. You see, I am emphasizing the name of Stiegel. I am particularly interested in this name. He appeals to me as a nobleman of God. He was not only noble by birth, but what is infinitely better he was a nobleman by achievement. There are traits in his character which will commend themselves to any man who is interested in noble manhood.

"The purpose of this service is two fold:

"1st. To interest the people present in the study of local history. There is a vast fund of splendid history that has not been recorded, etc.

"2nd. To celebrate the 163rd anniversary of the landing of Baron Stiegel, etc., etc.

"In the name of the congregation I

welcome you to our church."

Dr. Sieling followed and gave a brief history of the inception of the pilgrimage. He said in part: "What mean these two bouquets of roses, the red and the white? In the 15th century in England they meant a bloody family war of thirty years, ending only after Elizabeth of the white rose of York married Henry the 7th of Lancaster, the red rose. In the 20th century in the United States it means joy and peace and to-day the white rose of York stands with open arms to embrace the red rose of Lancaster and defy intervention by Uncle Sam or uncle John. The pilgrimage was born in the return trip from last Feast of Roses when Dr. Steck incidentally remarked he would like to visit the various points of interest in the Baron's life. Then followed the development of typifying the tradition, the house-top music, "the payment of the rose to the Baron every time he passed the graveyard," and the cannon on the hill, which was vividly typified, this time, by a heavenly artillery. The pilgrimage running through the month of August was one of the most gigantic schemes of historical investigation that was ever conceived in a local community."

This was followed by a short talk by Mrs. John N. Becker, owner of the Sees house, who said: "How we relish to go back 150 years to live over and appreciate the doings of noble characters in our own vicinity. In our daily routine of work we often times forget the noble deeds they wrought. It is an incentive for us to live nobler lives when we go over their life's deeds. For example, the beautiful ceremonial of the Feast of Roses, wherein it is shown that it was not dollars and cents Baron Stiegel wanted from the Lutheran congregation, but simply one beautiful red rose. Praise and honor should be given to the reviver of this ceremonial, a concrete example of charity, Dr. Sieling of our own time. It was no little effort on his part to bring this to a successful revival, at this ceremonial at which governors do themselves proud in addressing appreciative, intelligent audiences."

ADDRESS BY DR. I. H. BETZ

As a member of the York County Historical Society I also am glad to be present to present a tribute to the sterling worth of William Henry Stiegel. My nativity was cast in that same neighborhood in which he did so much for the sake of peace and righteousness. He did his duty for the right as he saw it. No man can do more—no man should do less. He cast a spell over that whole region which is just becoming realized at its true worth since he is becoming better known and better understood. He was a pioneer in a number of things. To him we are indebted for the first effort to manufacture glass in this country. If he was not the first man to endeavor to bring about the reconciliation of capital and labor in this country he was certainly among the first. He showed his workmen that he had their best interests at heart when he created such diversions as music, literary recreations, etc. Above all he set apart a room for religious worship and himself became the leader and expounder in this direction. That he had a taste for the esthetic is shown by his relation of the red rose as payment for the ground rent on which the church of the Lutheran faith was erected in Mannheim. Its aroma, its color and its fragrance all portended its application to the purpose. Likewise was he munificent to the church at Brickerville which gave him an asylum in the distress of his last years. Here when calamity overtook him he bravely set himself to work to labor in his own behalf without becoming a public charge in those dark days of suffering and poverty. Here close by the graves of a wife and grandchild he probably, too, found a sepulture, although in an unmarked and nameless grave—should such turn out to be the case. But the memory of Stiegel will grow greener as the years roll by. Already we seem, owing to the work of Dr. Sieling, to know more about him than did his contemporaries. Truth is eternal and ever will come uppermost.

Truly we live in thought, words and deeds, not years. Time may come and time may go, but good deeds will live forever. William Henry Stiegel though almost forgotten in years gone by is again grandly coming forward to be resuscitated and his last end shall not be like his first. He lives in our memories and these emblems dwell like the red rose he favored so much during life. May their memories ever be invested with aroma and fragrance that will cast a sweet incense over that memory which is coming so much in the foreground.

PROF. GEO. R. PROWELL'S ADDRESS

Prof. George R. Prowell, Author, Curator and Librarian of the York

County Historical Society in response to a call spoke as follows:

It is a pleasure to listen to words of praise in honor of one of the notable Germans who settled in this country with the sturdy Palatines and helped to build up the interests of the province of Pennsylvania during the Colonial period of our history. Most of these people, the Tueton race came from the region along the Rhine to this land of peace and plenty, when Europe was involved in internecine wars. They were invited to cross the Atlantic and purchase at a nominal cost, the fertile lands of Eastern Pennsylvania, which are now so highly prized by their descendants.

Many of these Palatines were of the peasant class, but among them were men of the highest type that Germany had produced. They secured lands from the proprietors, and settled in the primitive forests when the red men were their neighbors and with whom they lived on terms of friendship.

These Germans were invited to settle in this province by William Penn, the founder, who made several visits to the Palatinate country, offering them freedom of religious worship and every other opportunity that might be given to settlers of a new country. Penn knew that these people were industrious and imbued with a patriotic sentiment, they were also known to be honest, and enterprising, and today we can observe in all the counties of Southern Pennsylvania the impress the Germans made in the communities where they lived. They proved themselves loyal to William Penn and his successors, and when the revolutionary sentiment was gathering force they were among the first to support the cause of independence to prove that all men were created free and equal.

Among the early Germans, whose rank and station made him a leader of men, was Baron Von Stiegel, founder of the borough of Mannheim, and whose many virtues have been portrayed by other speakers invited to take part in this interesting ceremony. What is known as the "Feast of the Roses," originated by my friend, Dr. Sieling, and deserves to be perpetuated down through the corridors of time.

Stiegel and his followers nearly all belonged to the Lutheran or Reformed churches. Having written so much about these worthy people I feel as though I were one of them even though my ancestors belonged to the Celtic race, who also came to this country by invitation of William Penn.

Within one hundred yards of this church Baron Von Belen, a German nobleman, lived four years of the last century, and then moved to Pittsburg, where he became one of the leading citizens. During the Revolution, Baron Von Stuben, an aide on the staff of

Frederick the Great and a lieutenant general in the Russian Army, during the seven years' war spent two weeks here as the guest of Continental Congress, when York was the capital of the United States, during the darkest period of the Revolution. It was in York, he was commissioned a major general and was sent by Congress to Washington at Valley Forge; in order to drill the American troops in tactics, which had won so much prestige in the armies of Frederick the Great.

Stueben was brought here through the influence of Benjamin Franklin, then the American Commissioner at the court of France. Stueben spent one night at the village hotel in the borough of Manheim, on February, 1778, where he doubtless met Baron Stiegel, founder of the town and the most conspicuous personage in that part of Lancaster county.

These addresses were followed by a contralto solo exquisitely rendered by Mrs. J. L. Link. This was followed in a masterly address by Dr. A. R. Steck.

DR. A. R. STECK'S ADDRESS

Baron Stiegel was an attractive and commanding personality. He was a many-sided character. He touched life from various angles. In whatever relation he appeared he stood forth strong and conspicuous. Intensely sociable, he delighted in gathering his choicest friends about him to banquet them and minister to them in the delights which his wealth and culture enabled him to lavish on them. He was possessed of a spirit of generous and kingly hospitality. He loved his friends, and he loved to make them happy. Had he been of a more selfish nature, more calculating and sordid in spirit, undoubtedly his accumulations would have successfully tided him over the period of his financial embarrassment and saved him from the ruin which followed. But I would rather be Baron Stiegel rich and entertaining my friends in lavish social delights, and feeding the poor, and nourishing the sick, though ending my days in poverty and obscurity, than to be Baron somebody else, merely rich, and ever getting richer, but never blessing any body with gifts of love and sympathy, and finally dying fabulously rich, but dying "unloved, unhonored and unsung," a travesty of divinity, a mockery of humanity!

One of the finest things,—nay, I think, the finest thing in the make up of the Baron, was that he exercised the many sides of his nature in a way consistent with the religion which he professed and preached. We may find many people who are deeply religious, but who, alas, have felt constrained to crucify their social nature, who lay politics aside as a thing of the pit, and take no pleasure in legitimate play and look askance at athletics as the inspira-

tion of Beelzebub,—people who *bulge out* on one side of their nature and correspondingly "cave in" on the other sides of their nature,—dwarfed, atrophied ascetics. I do not question their goodness and faith, but I must denominate them narrow and painfully lacking in the development of a well-rounded, symmetrical christianity, often making them intolerant and forbidding.

Undoubtedly the basis of the Baron's character was his strong religious faith. He feared God. The gospel was the power of God in him. Truth in Christ sat as queen at the door of his heart, and he bowed under its scepter. He could have his coach and four, and all the insignia of wealth; he could lavish his hospitality upon his friends; he could plunge into the great ceremonial plans and ambitions of his wealth; he could maintain his place in the high social world; he could yield indulgence to the lawful pleasures of a wholesome, happy heart,—but the crowned and sceptered queen held him through it all to the exalted ideals of Christ. This religious faith gave him courage, purpose, strength, persistence under adversity, and fidelity to the end. When the Baron stood at the height of his fame and popularity and power, he was there the man of God, believing, worshipping, preaching, urging truth and the claims of eternity upon his employees. When reverses came and poverty and distress and obscurity, there again he was the same religious character, working with his hands, teaching school, keeping books, and on the Sabbath days performing the functions of the preacher. Always, through all his career, we see this golden thread of strong, virile religious faith. It controlled him, formed his character, and dominated his whole life, and in death lifted him up into fellowship with the Lord and maker of men.

As such the character and career of Baron Stiegel are well worthy the emulation of all young men who aspire to a life of riches, honor and power.

Mrs. Link again favored the audience by singing in her sweetest tones "When the Roses Bloom."

DR. EDMUND W. MEISENHELDER'S ADDRESS

Here are gathered together to-day mother Lancaster, her child of York—dating back to 1749, and her grandchild of Adams—dating back to 1800, three counties—originally but one—each with an English name, yet each permeated, through and through, with German blood. What a strange medley of fact and fiction!

We are gathered together here to pay fitting tribute to a common ancestry—to an ancestry peaceful, sturdy, and devout—which, breaking the ties of home and country, and braving a pathless ocean, sought, on this *then* foreign

shore, liberty to worship God as conscience dictated—a privilege, in the fatherland, denied. Everywhere, scattered over this wide domain, repose beneath the sod, many in unknown graves, the men and women of those early days, who blazed the way for the blessings we now enjoy, and who helped to make this country great.

As individually we appear on Life's stage, we are not alone the sons and daughters of that parentage which immediately preceded our being; on the contrary, we are the composite production of a long race of ancestors, with, here and there, the reproduction of types and peculiarities long since forgotten—a leaven that would not down, because endowed with a virility that assured regeneration. Equally true is it that each generation, each cycle in the round of time, is but a kaleidoscopic vision, perchance strange and inexplicable, of the countless ages of the past—of German, Gaul and Goth, of Briton, Celt, and Scot.

Met together here in amity and friendship are the descendants of a common ancestry—the Red Rose of Lancaster, and the White Rose of York—mingling together in the utmost harmony. We share in common the traditions of a cherished past—a past so remote as to have been utterly devoid of even a semblance of the force, the energy, the tremendous and soul-stirring influences which pervade the land to-day. Two centuries ago, where we are now gathered together to bear evidence to what God hath wrought, was then the forest primeval; the stream unfettered in its way to the sea; with the Red Man, the untutored child of Nature, sole monarch of all he surveyed.

But more especially would we commemorate to-day the simple virtues, the self-denying spirit, the quiet, unobtrusive lives of the nuns of Ephrata, who, almost a century and a half ago, counted it not loss to spend and be spent in the service of the Master; and, in the darkest hours of our country's history, hesitated not to sacrifice their own lives to succor the wounded and the dying—to sleep at last in unknown graves—with these heroic dead; both willingly laying upon the altar of their country the last full measure of devotion. It is meet that we here to-day, with uncovered heads, in songs of prayer and praise, should recognize the Christian devotion of the nuns of Ephrata—who, in the spirit of the Master—in their humble way—did what they could to relieve human suffering, and to assure to us the untold blessings which we now enjoy.

As we consider the simplicity of their lives; their consecration to Divine ideals; their unselfish sacrifices—and then recall how little the world knew of it all, and that these sainted women

—angels of mercy by Divine command—now sleep in nameless graves—well, may we say, in the language of the poet:

“Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The unfathomed depths of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its fragrance on the desert air.”

Unsought, unsuggested, and utterly unexpected I feel will be the words with which I shall close this address.—He who, in the face of every discouragement, through years of persistent research, with untiring diligence and unabated zeal, drew from the lore of the misty past, and from traditions well-nigh forgotten, the inspiration which has filled his life, and made of his self-chosen task—not a burden, but a labor of love, sees to-day the glad fruition of all his efforts.

To Dr. J. H. Sieling, our fellow citizen, more than to any other man, we are indebted for the light which, dispelling the mysteries of that well-nigh forgotten era, has succeeded in weaving about the life and character of Baron Stiegel, doubtless a scion of nobility—seeking to transplant to this Western World, not only the industries of the old, but also its glamour and magnificence—perchance even dreaming of establishing here a baronial court, with its army of retainers, its gayety and its fashion—yet living, throughout the full measure of his days, a life of Christian fortitude courage, and devotion—a romance of real life, rarely surpassed in instructiveness, and fascinating power.

To him this audience—and the counties of Lancaster, of York, and of Adams—owe a debt of lasting and heartfelt gratitude. He has builded far better than he knew, and, as we garland his brow with bay, we rejoice with him that, with unfading laurel, the end crowns his work.

Then came the parting address by the pastor, in a most feeling and soul-gratifying address. The multitude arose and sang “My Country 'Tis of Thee,” and the congregation slowly departed with the pastor's benediction.

Although the session lasted nearly two hours all seemed loth to go. A feeling of self-satisfying gratification pervaded the meeting that cannot be described on paper.

A singular incident was related by Mr. P. A. Elsesser, superintendent of St. Matthews Sunday school and head of the great Martin Carriage works, that he had just been to the reunion of his great-ancestor, Michael Zartman, at Brickerville, following in the wake of the pilgrims. This great-ancestor preceded the Baron by 22 years. He also made a proud record as a layman in baptizing an infant, born at sea, and made a record of the fact in the archives of the infant church at Brickerville where his own remains rest and are marked by a fine monument, just erected.